work of the scheme and normal financial norms of the concerned financial institution/Bank.

Cotton Production

753. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by Government to increase cotton production in the country;

(b) the target set and actual production of cotton in last three years;

(c) the target set for 1999-2000 and measures proposed to be adopted to increase cotton production in Ninth Plan; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) To increase cotton production in the country, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Intensive Cotton Development Programme is being implemented in various cotton growing States. Under the scheme, assistance is provided for the transfer of production technology through field demonstration and farmers training and supply of critical inputs such as seeds, sprayers, sprinklers, bio-agents etc. Further, to increase the productivity and quality of cotton, the Government has launched a Technology Mission on Cotton Development, from the current financial year, with objectives of research, dissemination of technology to farmers, improvement in marketing infrastructure and modernisation of Ginning & Pressing Factories. The production of cotton during the last three years and the estimated production for the current cotton year 1999-2000 are as under:

Year (Oct.- Sept.)	Production (In lakh bales of 170 kg. each)
1996-97	177.90
1997-98	158
1998-99	163
1999-2000	175*

*As estimated by the Cotton Advisory Board in its meeting held on 19.11.1999.